

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: APRIL 20, 2016

TO: MEMBERS OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

FROM: T&ES STAFF

SUBJECT: AGENDA ITEM # 2 – ITEMS FOR CONSENT

ISSUE: Staff update to Transportation Commission on various ongoing projects.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Commission receive the items for consent.

A. FUNDING UPDATE

Washington Area Transit Authority (WMATA)

In March 2016, the WMATA Board approved the FY 2017 operating budget. The FY 2017 operating budget included no fare increases or service reductions and maintained the FY 2016 level of jurisdictional operating subsidy (not including contributions for debt service) of \$845 million per year by increasing the amount of eligible preventative maintenance activities funded through FTA grants.

WMATA also proposed an \$898.8 million capital program for FY 2017 to fund critical safety and state of good repair investments. This is a change from the \$1.12 billion dollar asked in the original submittal. The goal is for WMATA to lead in spending for the program instead of lagging as it had in previous years. This amount would also reduce the long-term debt issued to the region for FY 2017 from \$287.7 to \$58.3 million to support the capital program.

The total planned FY 2017 capital expenditures proposed for the FY 2017 are \$950 million (as compared to the original December 2015 proposal of \$1.13 billion) and are supported by Federal Transit Administration (FTA) grant programs and a one-year extension of the current Capital Funding Agreement (CFA). This updated budget, has expense forecasts aligned with realistic project schedules without shifting priorities away from safety projects. The FY 2017 budget is also now programmatically aligned with FTA asset management and grants administration requirements. The City's portion of the FY 2017 capital program is \$8.5 million, with a long-term debt payment of \$2.6 million.

The CFA one-year extension of the current agreement was approved by City Council at their

April 12, 2016 meeting. The one-year CFA extension will support the updated FY 2017 capital budget.

Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA)

NVTA staff is reviewing CMAQ/RSTP applications for funding for FY 2022. VDOT is developing ratings for all 70% funds being proposed for FY 2017 in accordance with the provisions of HB599. The evaluations are scheduled to be completed by spring 2016.

Northern Virginia Transportation Commission (NVTC)

NVTC staff is currently reviewing the City's Transform 66 application for funds to install and operate multimodal real time transportation screens across the City at key transportation and employment centers. The City requested \$190,000 with a local match of \$10,000 for a project total of \$200,000. The call for projects for this funding had a very short window in March 2016, with announcements for the call of projects occurring a few weeks before applications were due.

The review process is ongoing and a recommended funding program will be presented to the NVTC commission in May 2016 and the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) in June 2016. The Transform 66 funds are designated to improve multimodal options for travelers using I-66 inside the beltway.

Background: The City's transportation program has many sources of funding from federal, state, regional, and local sources. City staff coordinates regularly with representatives from each agency listed above to discuss funding opportunities from state and regional sources and the City's funding obligations for WMATA.

POTOMAC YARD METRORAIL STATION

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and the National Park Service (NPS) are currently reviewing the third draft of the Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Once the document has been reviewed by the agencies and has been determined as meeting legal sufficiency requirements, it will be released for public review, followed by Records of Decision (RODs) from FTA and NPS.

The design process for the Metrorail station is continuing. The next meeting of the Potomac Yard Metrorail Implementation Work Group (PYMIG) will be held on April 25, 2016. In addition, City staff will be meeting with community members on April 18 and May 11 to discuss construction impacts. In addition to other outreach activities in late April and May, two open houses are planned (May 17 and June 6) to discuss the Development Special Use Permit (DSUP) for the station prior to its consideration by the Planning Commission and City Council in June.

At its April 12 meeting, City Council authorized the submission of a \$20 million grant application for a United States Department of Transportation TIGER Discretionary grant for the Potomac Yard Metrorail Station. City Council additionally authorized the City Manager to execute all necessary documents that may be required under this program.

Background: The Potomac Yard Metrorail Station project is an infill Metrorail station located between the National Airport and Braddock Road Metrorail stations on the Blue and Yellow lines in the vicinity of the Potomac Yard Development. For more information on the project, please visit www.alexandriava.gov/potomacyard.

B. ROUTE 1 METROWAY

In February 2016—the latest month for which we have figures—ridership was 34 percent higher than in February 2015. That same month, Metroway was on-time 97 percent of the time.

The Arlington section of the Crystal City Potomac Yard Transitway opened on April 17, with a dedicated transitway from South Glebe Road to 26th Street, and rush-hour bus-only lanes north through Crystal City. The route will also extend to Pentagon City, and during the peak period buses will run every six minutes between the Crystal City Metrorail Station and the Potomac Yard Shopping Center.

Background: During the first round of TIGER grants, the City received \$8.5 million to design and construct the Route 1 Transitway between Monroe Avenue and East Glebe Road. The City compiled additional grant funding and \$5.2 million in local funding to design/construct various elements of the Transitway project. The total cost of the Transitway including vehicles is approximately \$20 million. The Alexandria portion of the facility, also known as the Crystal City/Potomac Yard Transitway, opened in August 2014.

C. KING STREET METRORAIL STATION

City, DASH and WMATA staff have been working to complete the items required for the design-build contract package, which is expected to be advertised in mid to late-spring 2016. The package will include a plan for the temporary locations for transportation services currently using the facility, as well as a comprehensive outreach strategy to help the public understand where and how to access those services.

Background: The King Street Metrorail Station is Alexandria's largest transit facility and requires significant updates, expansions, and safety improvements. The City began addressing these needs by requesting that WMATA conduct a feasibility study for rebuilding the access facilities at the lot in 2006. The result of this study was released in March, 2008. Through an extensive vetting process with the general public and stakeholders, the City developed a design for the station that improves non-motorized access, bus access, shuttle and taxi access, short-term rental car access, and aesthetics. In 2012, the design was endorsed by the Transportation Commission, the City Council, and the Planning Commission. After approval, the design was refined, and the City determined that some of the features of the facility needed to meet City standards rather than WMATA standards. A long discussion between WMATA and the City resulted in a decision that allowed the facility to be designed using City standards. WMATA gave the City a permanent easement to construct a transit facility, and the City agreed to maintain the facility in perpetuity. After this agreement, a more detailed design was produced for the facility and the cost was higher than budgeted. The improvement was placed in the FY 2016 CIP budget process, and eventually acquired sufficient funding to be constructed.

D. EISENHOWER AVENUE METRORAIL STATION

The Eisenhower Avenue Metrorail Station is proceeding as the City's Department of Project Implementation (DPI) is assembling all of the information needed for the project's design consultant to develop a set of 60% plans for the improvements, which will be submitted to WMATA for review in spring 2016.

Background: The Eisenhower Avenue Metrorail Station project will use Federal Transit Authority (FTA) and Commonwealth funds to reconstruct the entrance of the Eisenhower Metrorail station, which will include improved amenities for transit patrons such as better weather protection and a prominent plaza. This improvement is necessary to accommodate all of the high-intensity growth adjacent and/or in close proximity to the station.

E. WEST END TRANSITWAY

At the March 29, 2016 Legislative Meeting, City Council adopted a resolution to re-concur with the 2012 Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) to provide Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) in dedicated lanes, where practicable, between the Van Dorn Metrorail station and the Pentagon. Council also discussed the importance of providing a high quality public space by increasing the number of trees along the corridor, especially in areas with dedicated transit lanes.

The project's next steps include: the completion and submission of the environmental documentation to the FTA; the completion of the Alternatives Analysis report; coordination with the Department of Project Implementation (DPI) to advance the project into the design phase, and; administrative close-out of the current phase.

Background: In December 2013, the City kicked off an Alternatives Analysis (AA) / Environmental Documentation process for the West End Transitway (also referred to as Corridor C) as part of the Federal NEPA Process. The AA/Environmental Documentation will analyze and refine the alignment as defined by the Corridor Work Group (CWG) and City Council in 2012, and will identify any impacts and potential mitigation associated with the recommended alternative. The study is partially funded by a grant from the FTA and is the first step towards applying for a federal Small Starts grant for project design and construction.

F. MOTORCOACH TASK FORCE

The motorcoach data collection process is being conducted in April 2016. Staff is collecting motorcoach occupancy and turnover information at existing motorcoach facilities (motorcoach loading/unloading locations and motorcoach parking spaces). A project consultant collected parking turnover data at on-street parking locations that are being studied as potential future motorcoach facilities. Staff has coordinated with property owners of off-street locations to assess their willingness to be included in the study. Staff will present its data and study findings to the Motorcoach Task Force at its second meeting on May 31.

In addition, the City has initiated an Ambassador Program to provide information to motorcoach operators to reduce motorcoach operators' confusion and potential infractions throughout Old Town's easternmost streets during the peak season,

especially due to construction near the waterfront. The ambassadors will be on site from April 15 through June 30 on Wednesdays through Sundays between the hours of 4:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m., and will refer operators to a permitted, convenient location, and provide additional information that includes parking locations and the City's 24 hour motorcoach hotline.

Background: Due to pending development along the Waterfront and within Old Town, the City faces the loss of all three of its current short-term motorcoach parking locations (15 spaces total), as well as the loss of space used for unloading and loading on the Strand where queuing occurs during the peak season. This loss necessitated a re-examination of motorcoach parking and loading/unloading spaces. The Ad Hoc Motorcoach Task Force, which operated 2004-2005 and 2008-2010, will provide input to staff regarding future short-term parking and loading/unloading locations.

G. OLD TOWN AREA PARKING STUDY

Staff is currently reviewing and working on the short term recommendations included in the Work Plan. A number of these recommendations are dependent on funding, which will be reviewed as part of the FY 2017 budget. Staff is developing the parameters for a pilot program for a residential pay by phone system and anticipates review by the Council in June. An analysis of the locations for additional wayfinding signage is also underway.

Background: At their legislative meeting on February 9, 2016, the Council voted to receive the revised parking management work plan that summarizes the recommendations of the OTAPS Work Group and outlines the timeline for consideration of each recommendation. This action allows staff to begin review and work on the short term recommendations. A summary of the Work Group's recommendations was presented to the Transportation Commission in September 2015. All of the 2015 OTAPS Work Group meeting materials are posted online at: <http://alexandriava.gov/tes/info/default.aspx?id=77053>.

H. PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE MASTER PLAN

The draft Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan released on January 14, 2016 was revised based on comments made through AlexEngage, and input from the Ad Hoc Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan Advisory Committee at its February 25, 2016 meeting. This revised draft includes three key changes. Additional information on implementation was added, the Vision Zero strategy was moved to a higher priority, and additional language regarding the need for low-stress protected bike facilities was added. The revised draft was presented to the Transportation Commission on March 16, 2016. The Commission endorsed the plan, and recommended additional language for Pedestrian Engineering Strategy #5 (related to encouraging automatic pedestrian signals), and Bicycle Policy/Program Strategy #12 (related to education and outreach to include children, and working with Alexandria City Public Schools). The Commission also noted the need to provide additional funding in the Complete Streets program to fund the plan's recommendations. On April 5, the Planning Commission approved an amendment to replace the Pedestrian and Bicycle section of the Transportation Master Plan with the proposed text changes from the Transportation Commission. The City Council will review the plan at its April 16 public hearing, and will be asked to approve the amendment to the Transportation Master Plan.

Background: The City is conducting an update of the Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan and developing Complete Streets Design Guidelines, which will be completed in early 2016. The purpose of this update to the City's Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan and development of a Complete Streets Design Guidelines will be to:

- Develop a non-motorized system that addresses the needs of all users (pedestrians, bicyclists, vehicles, and transit riders) and is consistent with the vision of the Transportation Master Plan, which encourages transportation options and reduced dependence on the private automobile;
- Develop both a bicycle network and pedestrian case study areas, and;
- Develop a framework for implementing non-motorized policies and projects citywide.

More information is available at: www.alexandriava.gov/pedbikeplan

I. OLD TOWN NORTH SMALL AREA PLAN

Staff is currently studying Phase 1 items, which includes a preliminary analysis of the potential two-way conversion of Madison/Montgomery Streets, identifying potential railbanking needs / considerations of the Norfolk Southern rail spur, streetscape improvement needs, street connectivity options, and considerations for transit in the area. This analysis was presented to the Old Town North Infrastructure and Environmental Sustainability/Transportation Subcommittee on April 13th.

Work has also begun on Phase 2 (parking study) and Phase 3 (transportation study). Staff has developed a scope of work and will be working with a consultant this May to collect occupancy data at on-street and select off-street locations in the study area. This data will help identify on-street areas where parking demand is high and will also evaluate garages for potential shared parking. Staff is also developing a scope of work to issue this summer for a consultant to do a larger, more detailed transportation study that will incorporate proposed land use changes and potential changes to the street network such as one-way street conversions and new street connections into NRG.

Background: The current Old Town North Small Area Plan was adopted in 1992. The planning effort to update this small area plan began in September 2015 with the appointment of an Advisory Group and is anticipated to conclude in January 2017 with the Plan adoption. As part of this process, a week-long charrette was held in November to identify issues, needs, and ideas for a broad range of categories including transportation, housing, land use, and open space. The transportation analysis for this update will be conducted in three phases over the planning period. For more information, please visit: <http://www.alexandriava.gov/86032>

J. SEMINARY ROAD AND QUAKER LANE SPEED REDUCTION

On March 25, 2016 the speed limits on Seminary Road between I-395 and Quaker Lane, and on Quaker Lane between Duke Street and West Braddock Road, were reduced from 35mph to 25mph. Two weeks prior to the speed limit reduction, variable message signs announced the upcoming change to drivers along these roadways. Staff

will monitor the roadways and adjacent streets to determine the impact of the speed limit reduction on vehicle speeds as well as volumes and crashes. An update will be provided to the Traffic and Parking Board in fall 2016. The Alexandria Police Department (APD) will be increasing their enforcement of these roadways during this time.

Background: In the summer of 2015, residents of both Seminary Road and Quaker Lane requested that the City create a program to help reduce speeds on Seminary Road between Kenmore Avenue and Janney's Lane and Quaker Lane between Duke Street and West Braddock Road. Staff attended meetings with the community in June, July, and December 2015 to discuss these concerns with the residents and work toward a solution. Over 250 residents who live along this corridor signed a petition in favor of this solution. T&ES and APD have been working together collaboratively to assess the impact of this community request.

The Department of Transportation and Environmental Services (T&ES) and the Alexandria Police Department (APD) proposed an initiative to the Traffic and Parking Board on February 1, 2016 to reduce speed limits from 35mph to 25mph and increase enforcement for both Seminary Road and Quaker Lane (south of King Street). With the proposed initiative, the streets will be monitored to evaluate the effectiveness of the speed limit reduction and increased enforcement efforts before an increased fine the consideration of an increased fine. The Board made the following to recommendations to the City Manager: 1) that the speed limits on these roadways be lowered to 25mph, and; 2) that staff evaluate the effectiveness of the speed limit reduction by measuring actual speed and crash reductions six months after the speed limit reduction occurs.

K. CITY STRATEGIC PLAN

At the March 16, 2016 meeting, staff provided an overview of the City Strategic Plan and schedule. Staff will come back to the Commission later this spring to refine the vision and goals. In addition, community meetings are planned for this spring to discuss the prioritization of goals. Staff has prepared the Boards and Commissions worksheet for the Transportation Commission (Attachment 1). This worksheet reinforces that the updated strategic plan should be informed by previously adopted plans and policies. The Commission has the opportunity to provide additional suggestions on what is important in the development of the strategic plan.

Background: The Alexandria City Council Strategic Plan was adopted in September 2004 and updated in January 2006 and June 2010. The 2010 updated City Strategic Plan was intended to be in effect until 2015. The City Strategic Plan is an opportunity for the newly installed City Council to work with members of the community to update the City's strategic direction and priorities for the period of FY 2017- FY 2022. In September 2016, the draft City Strategic Plan will be considered for adoption by City Council.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. City Strategic Plan Boards and Commission Worksheet